

so far (it's alright)

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so far (it's alright) by heartcutout (orphan_account)

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Summary:

eddie spends all his time in the art department; he finds comfort in the process of creating, in finally having control over the chaos for once in his life.

richie spends all his time in the music department; there's something familiar about the way his guitar strings twang and vibrate against his fingers as he plucks them, something that feels kinda like safety and a lot like home.

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Author's Note:

so this has been in the works for quite a while! idek if i'll even finish it but! this whole fic is dedicated to the georgies arm™ gc on twitter (i love u losers!!!). the title is from a the 1975 song (of the same name) and all the characters are around sixteen in this fic (i dont know where that places them in the american school sytem but yanno!) this hasn't been beta'd so sorry for any mistakes!

(also if think shipping irls/sexualizing minors is okay this fic isnt for u!!!!!! go away!!!!!!)

It was three weeks into class, and Eddie, surprisingly, was enjoying himself a great deal. Not that he'd ever admit it to anyone.

He'd taken art class, mainly at the suggestion of his therapist (something to do with 'taking back control' over his life and 'allowing himself to be make a mess,') but also kinda to piss off his mom too. He wasn't exactly excited for it ('dreading it' was probably more accurate) but at the same time, the weird sense of satisfaction he got from choosing something completely independently, something his mom wouldn't approve of, outweighed the immense unease he felt whenever he imagined himself covered in paint, or clay, or just generally doing something completely out of character for him.

"You're too fragile," his mom used to say, when he would ask why he couldn't take art with his friend, Bill. 'Anyways, it's not right to see a boy your age in art class. Any boy over thirteen that takes art is either a pansy or a stoner' she had huffed in distaste.

'Funny.' He thought bitterly, after receiving his timetable for the first time. One down, one to go.

It's safe to say that Eddie's relationship with his mom wasn't going great, once he'd kinda realized that their whole relationship was based off of her emotionally manipulating him, and that it'd left him all kinds of fucked up, but when he walked into his first art class (a double period) he couldn't help but wonder if she'd been right all along. He was still upset with her, yes. Angry? Most definitely, but at the same time, she'd just been trying to protect him, right? Maybe he should just go see if he could drop the class, last minute. Maybe he could-

"E-Eddie!" Bill called out from across the room. He slugged his bag off of the desk to the left of him and waved him over. "I saved you a seat!"

Any doubt or hesitation had been momentarily forgotten in the rush of immense relief he felt at seeing a familiar face in such an alien setting. He still felt that familiar hitch in his breath, his fingers still yearned to clutch for his aspirator, but, he thought to himself as he greeted Bill and slid into his seat, maybe it wouldn't be that bad after all.

And he was right. Well, up until today. It'd been three weeks since Eddie had started art classes, and although they'd caused him an awful amount of grief to begin with ("Bill do you know how fuckin' toxic paint fumes can be? And you don't even care - You might as well be huffing that shit!") Eddie had fallen into somewhat common practise. Yeah, it was incredibly hard for him to wrap his mind around something he'd never really paid attention to, or appreciated, but Eddie was good art art. *Really* fucking good. It came to him as a bit of a shock, in all honesty. Especially seeing as he never really

understood the hype about abstract art till he started making it himself. There was something....profound... about it, he had realized. The fact that within it, you were capturing emotions, feelings instead of objects and landscapes almost seemed unreal; he'd found a way of communicating everything he'd ever felt, so precisely, and so intricately kind of shocked him. He'd never really been this passionate about anything anymore. Even his therapist thought he was doing better. ' *You're letting yourself loose more,* ' he remembers her telling him, something that he didn't even think he had the capability to do till recently. So yeah, it was all very therapeutic, but that also meant he got the opportunity to toss around with Bill for an extra five hours a week, which usually involved them sitting at the back of class, doodling on each other's hands when they finished early.

So yes, art was going great. Going *swell* , in fact, until Eddie had told Bill to go ahead and meet the guys for lunch, and that he'd stay behind and clean up. The drain in their classroom had been clogged so, instead of leaving them on the side for some poor teacher to clean up (Eddie Kaspbrak was *not* raised by animals, folks) he decided he'd traipse down the hall, to the next art class over, and clean up in there. What he underestimated was his ability to walk, carrying five palettes of paint and open and close the classroom door - the fact that he had only just began peeking over five foot not helping in the slightest. So, when he full on collided with some lanky kid coming at what seemed like fifty miles an hour, from around the corner (from the music block?) and was sent reeling, he just sighed with a hollow sort of acceptance. It's just his luck that something like this would fucking happen.

"Uhsshitimsosorryfuck-" He spat out, getting to his feet shakily and trying to reach for the palettes he'd dropped. Eddie could feel himself going a horrible shade of red as he tried to wipe a bit of fuchsia off of his sweater. At least God didn't hate him that much, he thought, surveying the damage and coming to the realization that he hadn't spilt that much paint after all-

“Shit!” The guy exclaimed loudly, with Eddie pausing, mid wipe, his head shooting up to look at him for the first time.

“Oh fuck.” Eddie whispered. The guy was covered in paint. He was wearing some oversized black band tee or whatever, that was now caked in green paint (‘Like my insides’ Eddie thought, weakly). “Oh fuck. ” He repeated again, louder this time - although he wasn't even certain the words were actually making it out of his mouth - his ears had started ringing and he was pretty sure his throat was closing up.

‘ No. ’ He mentally scolded himself. ‘ *I can still breathe. I’m fine .* ’

“Shit, I’m so sorry?” He spoke up, reaching for the boy to attempt to - what? Wipe away the paint? Salvage his shirt? Eddie didn’t quite know, till he was awkwardly stood in front of him, reaching for his shirt, and realized that *hey* . This was some guy he *didn’t know* . And not only had he made a fool of himself, but was also grossly invading his privacy. He shot backwards as if he’d been shocked, almost losing his footing till-

A sturdy arm yanked him upwards.

“Hey. Cool it, man.” The guy said, still holding onto Eddie’s arm. He looked down, as if just remembering that they were still attached and dropped his hand hastily, with a chuckle. “The face is still intact,” he said, smirking and framing his face with an over dramatic flourish “So it’s all good.”

It wasn't till then that Eddie had actually looked the boy straight in the face, and was actually taken aback. His face seemed to be fixed into a permanent grin of amusement (Which Eddie, for the love of God, couldn't understand, seeing as he'd just split the whole damn art department all over the kid) yet underneath it all, his features seemed soft with concern. A slight smattering of freckles across adorned the bridge of his nose, which these humongous, coke bottle glasses sat up upon, sliding precariously further and further down the boy's face. The lens were so huge, they magnified his eyes; Eddie thought he looked quite like a puppy. Taking all of this into account, he felt slightly (only slightly) less intimidated. All this considered, along with his unruly mop of black, messy hair (that was just beginning to curl at the ends, Eddie noticed - It looked as if the guy needed a haircut) made him seem a lot less like the menace he would've assumed from his clothes, and more like a lanky dork. He was *cute*. Not that Eddie knew how to, or would dare to vocalize any of this.

“Uh,” He began, wringing his fingers together hesitantly.

“Seriously. We've got lunch next, right? So I'll stay for a bit and help you clean up.”

“It's really not that bad. It's my fault, I'll deal with it.”

“Bullshit.” Eddie sighed. “Just learn when to admit defeat.....” Richie gestured towards him in a ‘go on’ fashion’.

“....Eddie.”

“Learn when to accept defeat, Eddie.” The boy smirked, offering his hand. “I’m Richie.”

Eddie looked down dubiously. Not only were the boy’s - No. *Richie’s* nails bitten to stubs, but hand was covered in paint.

He rolled his eyes dramatically. “Hey! We’re already covered in the shit, what harm is shaking my hand gonna do?”

“None, I guess.” Eddie said, warming up to the boy towering over him, ever so slightly, and reaching for his hand gingerly.

“You’ve got a weak handshake on you, man. Says a lot about your character.”

Eddie rolled his eyes and dropped Richie’s hand. “Whatever.” He scoffed.

“Right!” He exclaimed, bending down to pick up some of the palettes they’d knocked over. “But,” He stopped, looking Eddie straight in the eye “If you wanted to make it up to me, you’re gonna have to replace my shirt. It’s designer. It costs seventy dollars.” Richie said stiffly, wrinkling his nose.

Eddie felt a ball of dread unfurl inside him; his draw dropped with shock. He didn’t have that kind of money! And his mom would kill him if she knew how much of a mess he’d made! The guy had seemed so friendly only mere moments ago, and now he seemed... almost

snobby? “Uh,” He sputtered grossly, for what felt like the millionth time in the last five minutes. He felt a bit sick. Okay, that was an understatement. He felt like he could hurl at any given moment.

“Wellyeahsureimeanit’sonlyfair-” he began, staring intently at his scuffed chuck taylors and wringing his fingers in worry.

“-SIKE!” Richie yelled abruptly, cutting Eddie off and elbowing him in the ribs. “Holy fuck, Eds - Can I call you Eds?-" He gasped between laughs “You should’ve seen your fucking face!” He hollered, his laughter increasing whilst he leant against Eddie for support. Eddie was just stood there, shell shocked, his mouth forming a little ‘o’. Richie continued, oblivious to the fact that Eddie was still reeling. “Man you looked like you were gonna shit yourself!” He exclaimed on the verge tears, lifting up his glasses and wiping dramatically at his eyes.

Eddie clenched and unclenched his fists in anger - his stature just as tense as before. “ *Fuck you*, man.” He spat. Richie froze, only just now understanding that maybe he hadn’t found his little scare all that funny, at all. “And,” He began, faltering, searching for his words “Don’t fucking call me Eds! My name is *Eddie* !”

“Woah, okay, hold up Eds-” Eddie glared at him. “ *Eddie*. ” He enunciated carefully, raising his hands in mock defense. “I was just kidding, okay?”

Eddie just glared at him and crossed his arms. “I thought jokes were supposed to be funny.”

“Ouch.” Richie clutched a hand to his heart exasperatedly. “We’ve just met and already you’re insulting my humor.” He said, offering up a weak smile. This Eddie guy was making fun of him, joking about him, right? That meant he couldn’t have been too angry. He sobered up. “Seriously though, I’m sorry if I freaked you out.” He said, looking awfully sincere, considering he’d just been joking mere moments ago. He held Eddie’s gaze intently until Eddie had to look away, feeling too intimate and uncomfortable around this weird kid that he had *literally* just met. “I joke a lot. It’s kinda my thing. Everyone hates me for it.” He laughed dryly, pushing his glasses back up the bridge of his nose, almost impulsively.

Eddie looked at Richie again, out of the corner of his eye. He really didn’t get this kid. Sure, they’d just met, but he seemed to personify so many things all at once. A second ago he was acting like a complete ass and now he was getting all heartfelt and emotive?

“Uh. That’s okay,” Eddie grumbled, feeling oddly compelled to forgive the boy. “Just don’t pull any shit like this again, okay? You almost gave me a damn heart attack.” Eddie thinks back to how embarrassing it would’ve been if he had to fumble around for his aspirator, sputtering and gasping in the midst of an asthma attack whilst Richie looked onwards, most likely judging him. Oh boy, what a way to give a good first impression.

Eddie couldn’t really stay mad at him though. Not when he had been the one to cause all this mess, and Richie had blindly forgiven him in a heartbeat. Not when Richie was now looking up at Eddie as if he’d just heard the greatest news in the world.

“So I’m forgiven?”

“Don’t push your luck.” Eddie grumbled, scrubbing at his eyes in exasperation. “Why do you even care? We met like, five minutes ago. You’re practically a stranger.”

Richie hesitated for a split second (Eddie could almost swear that he looked a little flustered). “A *simply dashing* stranger at that.” He crooned in what Eddie could only assume was meant to be a British accent. It was Eddie’s turn to roll his eyes. “Seriously though, can’t I care for the sake of caring?”

“I’m not even gonna pretend to know what that means.”

“Right. Makes sense I guess.”

“No, it really doesn't.”

“Wow, Eds. Pretty damn bold of you.”

“For fucks sake don’t call-”

“Anyways!” Richie intentfully cut Eddie off. “It’s only fair if I make it up to you! So let me buy you something from the cafeteria after we clean up,” Eddie opened his mouth to protest, but Richie held up a finger to silence him. “Just something small, like a salad or whatever - I’m not *actually* made out of money. This shirt was six dollars from Goodwill. But yeah, after that, we go our separate ways. Our story draws to a close with my generous act of kindness. The end.” He looked at Eddie expectantly.

“But-”

“There’s always a ‘but’, isn’t there?”

Eddie went on, ignoring him. “ *I spilt the paint on you* . This is all my fault. I should be the one making it up to you.”

Richie pretend to consider it. “Right. Well, you can make it up to me by letting me win.”

“This is a verbal conversation. You can’t ‘*win*’ .”

“Then how come I’m winning?”

“Jesusfuck-”

“I’m taking that as a ‘ *yes, Richie* ’.” He scoffed proudly. “Anyways,” He gestured towards the discarded paint palettes. “I’m no art student - show me where these go?”

-

Eddie and Richie walked, shoulder to shoulder into the cafeteria,

twenty minutes after lunch had started, heading straight towards the queue.

“I can’t believe you’re just gonna walk around all day with paint on your shirt.”

“Hey! It adds to my aesthetic sensibility!”

Eddie scoffed. “Aesthetic sensibility....Right.”

“You can't talk!” Richie exclaimed. “You’re wearing suspenders and shorts, and a goddamn sweater!” He reached out playfully to twang one of Eddie’s straps before having his hand hastily swatted away.

“Don’t you fuckin’ dare.” Eddie warned.

“Whatever, man.” He joked playfully, as they strolled up to the queue. “Anyways, whatcha want?”

“I. Uh. Honestly you don’t have to get me anything. You helped me clean up, right? I’m thankful enough for that, as it is.”

“Eddie.” Richie turned, from where he was looking at the day's specials to stare him down directly. “I’m going to give you two minutes to decide what you want, or else I’m gonna order you the *meatloaf*.” He enunciated slowly.

Ah. Derry High's meatloaf special. By far the least edible thing on the school menu. Only served on Fridays, Eddie noticed, which only fuelled the conspiracy he had Stan had that formed: that it consisted of the weeks' prior leftovers. Eddie would rather go without than touch that stuff with a ten foot pole.

"...Right... I'll go for a muffin then."

"Oui, Oui." Richie sniffed. "Excellent choice. Monsieur has decided to go for the muffin." He said, in the most obnoxious sounding French accent Eddie had ever heard.

"I'm pretty sure that's an insult to French people everywhere."

"We've know eachother five minutes and already you're critiquing my impressions, too?" Richie turned to ask, after grabbing Eddie's muffin and a packet of chips, and walking round to the counter to pay. "It's too soon, man. Too soon."

That did get Eddie wondering, though. He and Richie hadn't even know eachother for a day yet, and look: Richie was already buying him lunch? And weirdly enough, Eddie wasn't all that averse to the idea either? Although he couldn't deny was a little taken aback by how comfortably he felt, joking around with Richie, considering they barely knew each other.

"Here," Richie handed him his muffin hastily, snapping Eddie out of his thoughts. "I guess this is where our thrilling saga draws to a

close.” He sniffed again, pretending to wipe a single tear from his eye.

“I guess so.” Eddie replied, looking around the cafeteria to see if he could spot Bill, Ben or Stan at their usual table. Ben spotted him first, mouthing a ‘What’s going on?’ In Eddie’s direction. He just shook his head and chuckled. “Uh. Thank you for buying me lunch?”

“Are you asking me, or telling me?”

“Both? Neither? Look - I don’t know. But I really appreciate it. And sor-”

“-My God, Eddie...” Richie looked at Eddie expectantly.

“..... Kaspbrak.”

“Hm. Kaspbrak.” Richie finished, as if he were testing out the way Eddie’s name sounded rolling off of the tip of his tongue. “Well, if you say sorry one more fucking time I’m gonna scream. Or cry. Or both. It’s honestly no big deal.”

“Okay, well.... Thanks? I should probably get going.” He said fiddling with the straps of his backpack.

“Yeah, me too.” Richie said, pushing his glasses up once more, for the umpteenth time that day, and turning around to spot his friends,

Eddie guessed. He waved at someone across the hall that Eddie couldn't quite see, and then turned back to him.

"Till we meet again, my dearest Eddie Spaghetti." Richie chuckled, bowing graciously and then turning to walk away.

"Don't fucking call me that!" Eddie called after him, his words seeming less threatening and more affectionate, as tuned and began to trek towards his regular table.

He slid into the empty seat next to Stan and set down his bag. Everyone just stared.

"Uh." Bill began. "I know I-l-ef't you to clean u-u-up but you're like h-h-half an hour la-a-ate."

"Yea, well I kinda made a bit of a mess." Eddie then went on to recall the whole story - toning down all the embarrassing moments.

"Richie Tozier?" Stan asked.

Eddie shrugged. "I don't know, probably? I didn't get his last name."

"Pretty tall? Music Student? Coke bottle glasses? Horrible impressions?" Ben chirped in.

“Horrible impressions? Fuck, yes.” He said, thinking back to the god awful French one he’d attempted upon their entrance to the cafeteria. Eddie wasn’t sure as to whether or not he was a music student till now, though. He wasn’t surprised. He has that music student *look* , plus the music block was directly opposite the art block anyways.

Wait.

The music block was directly opposite the art block.

Eddie doubted that was the last time he’d bump into Richie, and for some reason, that very thought made his stomach flutter.

“God!” Stan exclaimed, breaking Eddie out of his momentary haze. “He’s in my history - and I’m pretty sure he never shuts up.”

“D-d-don’t be mean, Stan.” Bill chided, laughing softly. “But still,” He turned back to Eddie “That doesn’t explain w-w-why you’re so flustered all of a sudden.”

Was he? Fuck? No, why would he be flustered anyways? He’d just met the guy; he was just still processing everything that had happened earlier, that’s all.

“Maybe it does.” Stan commented, not even looking up from his food.

“Wha-” Eddie questioned, being abruptly snapped out of his

momentary haze.

“Aww, m-man,” Bill chuckled lowly. “Does Eddie here have a crush?” He teased playfully, nudging him with his elbow.

“Fuck off, Bill.” Eddie muttered under his breath.

“Yeah, Bill,” Ben intercepted. “Crushes are completely normal - you don't have to tease him about it. That's so middle school.” Eddie knew that Ben was just trying to help, and that he had good intentions but it still felt like betrayal.

“Ben!” Eddie yelled, even more so abruptly this time - with a red flush slowly creeping up his neck. “I don't-” he paused, to glance around the table and stare everyone down, making sure they got the message “-have a crush on Richie! *Richie!* ” He turned to Stan “I've known the guy for five minutes! All I know about him is that he has a god awful sense of humor, and seemingly doesn't know what a glasses wipe is.” He huffed, proceeding to fold his arms.

“Oh really?” Stan quirked a brow. “Then explain why you let him buy you lunch, two seconds after you'd both met, even though you've been bringing packed lunches every day for the last three years.” He said, gesturing towards the muffin sat in front him. “As if you're going to eat that - you go out of your way to avoid cafeteria food at all costs.”

Stan ducked last minute, narrowly missing the muffin after Eddie lobbed it at his head. He just shook his head and laughed, resuming his conversation with Ben about the Maths homework, or Chemistry

homework, or whatever it was they were on about. Eddie sank impossibly further down into his seat - his whole face now an uneven shade of red - and angrily pulled his lunchbox out of his bag, resolving to never talk to Stanley Uris again.

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Richie sighed wistfully as he slid into his seat.

“What’s got you in such a good mood?” His friend, Mike asked sincerely, glancing up from his phone as Richie sat down.

“Wait, no! Lemme guess!” Beverly yelped, setting down her shake. “A teacher fell over in the parking lot?”

“No way Bev - he’d be shitting himself.” Mike quipped back.

“Very true. Someone finally handed Bowers’ ass to him?”

Mike opened his mouth to interject once more but Richie scoffed. “If that happened I’m pretty sure it’d be trending on local twitter.”

Mike nodded wistfully, “My point exactly.”

“Well-” Bev began.

“Well you’re both wrong.” Richie deadpanned. “Actually,” he said, dragging out the ‘Y’ “I just fulfilled my one good deed of the day.”

“That’s a first.” Bev scoffed.

“Ignore her,” Mike said, rolling his eyes playfully. “We’re proud of you, really.” He said, clutching his heart to his chest patronisingly.

Bev wrinkled her nose “Ew. Richie’s sense of humor has started rubbing off on you. Now we gotta throw the whole friendship away.” She exclaimed in faux disgust, turning away. Mike laughed heartily while Richie just stared on blankly.

“ Anyways ,” Richie sighed exasperatedly. “This kid - an art student,” Mike nodded “-was coming round the corner as I was running out of the music block, to meet you guys. Anyways we full-on collided with one another-”

“-Sounds like it was probably your fault if you were the one running.”

Richie raised a finger. “Shush, Beverly. Please.” She rolled her eyes in response, which Richie took as a sign to continue. “So we end up colliding with one another, except he was carrying all these paint palettes and I might of just sent them flying.”

“Oh my God, Richie.”

“Hey! I faced the brunt of it!” He said, opening his jacket and gesturing to some of the green, which still streaked his t shirt. “Eddie didn’t even walk away with a scratch!”

“So the mystery artist has a name now?” Mike raised an eyebrow.

“Har Har Har. Anyways, for the third fucking time, being the gentleman that I am, I decided to stop and help him clean up the mess.”

“So he’s the cutie I saw you walk in with.”

“Yup!” Richie said, not realizing that he’d in fact, called Eddie cute, til long after it had left his mouth. Bev grinned and pretended not to notice.

“Wow, that’s actually really kind of you, Richie.” Mike exclaimed sincerely.

“What did I tell you?” He said, puffing out his chest, proudly.

“Wait.” Bev turned from Mike, to stare Richie directly in the eyes. “There’s something he’s not telling us.” She smirked.

“Am not.”

“Are too.”

“ *Am not*, Beverly!”

“I swear, you two are insufferable.” Mike said with a sigh.

“I’ll give you my last cig if you tell me.”

“Fine. Whatever.” Richie grumbled. “Your loss.” he said, making grabby hands at Beverly. She rummaged around in her bag, locating what she was looking for and tossing him the near empty pack, which he then pocketed hastily.

“Maybe you should both-”

“-Consider quitting? Yea, thanks, mom.” Richie replied tiredly.

Mike held up his hands in mock defense “Sorry for actually caring about you guys’ health.”

Bev smiled sweetly and patted him on the shoulder. “Ignore Richie, Mike. He’s just dumb and doesn’t know how to use his words unless they’re coming outta his ass.” She said, sticking out her tongue at

him. Richie stuck his out back, equally as childish.

“Whatever, Bev. It’s not that deep, anyways. At least not as deep as your moms-”

“ -*Richie!* ” Both Mike and Bev yelled in unison.

“Fine, fine. Whatever.” He said, grinning. “I, Uh, may have convinced him that my shirt was like really expensive and that he’d have to pay for it. He spat out, in one breath, feeling legitimately apologetic for how much his joke had spooked the kid.

“Again, Oh my *God*, Richie!” Bev swatted at him.

“You’re an ass.” Mike deadpanned.

“I know, I know, But! I didn’t expect him to be that gullible, yanno? This shirt cost next to nothing - I didn’t think he’d believe me! It was supposed to be pretty funny at first but then the guy straight up looked like he was going to start crying!”

“Please tell me you at least apologised.”

“Of course I did, Mike. I wasn’t raised by savages.” He grumbled. “As I’ve said before, I’m a true gentleman.” He said, slipping into his British Voice “I escorted him to lunch and even treated him to a muffin and everything. The old chap didn’t know what hit him!”

“About a 5”8 ball of trash: I feel sorry for the guy.” Bev quipped.

“I was talking about my good looks but it’s okay. Even if you can’t appreciate them, I sure as hell know your mom does.”

“Wow, Richie’s joking around even more so than usual. This must be God’s form of payback for when I didn’t hold the door open for that old lady at the library.” Mike said, looking up towards the ceiling and pulling a pleading face.

“Although I get your point, Mike, we both know you’re literally too sweet to pull anything like that. No, I think Richie is hiding something.” Bev said, nudging him with her foot, under the table.

“Beverly, tell your dealer to hook me up with whatever he’s supplying you with, ASAP, okay?” Richie replied with mock sincerity, clearly frustrated.

“Is our little trashmouth whipped?” She teased on, completely ignoring Richie’s last comment.

Mike grinned, looking down at his food to avoid his death glare. “I swear, you guys are always bickering. You’re like an old married couple.”

“Yeah.” Bev laughed. “Except we’re both gay as shit.”

Mike snorted. “Again, very true.”

“And if he didn’t have his eyes on this Eddie guy.” She giggled.

“Hmn. Debatable. Although the artist and the musician? That’s cute”

“Oh my God, could both of you just shut the fuck up? I swear to God.” Richie groaned, sinking into his seat.

“Wow. looks like domestic bliss isn’t all he thought it’d be, Bev.”

Richie whipped the pair (who were now both collectively laughing at him) the bird, and sunked impossibly further into his seat, plugging in his headphones and cranking the volume on his phone until it was obnoxiously loud.